

## **ITEM #4: ENVIRONMENT**

### **Plan Vision and Challenges**

The Sector Plan seeks to guide development of the Metro area and create opportunities to improve the environmental setting.

### **Forest Conservation**

#### **Staff Recommendations**

- Designate forest reserve areas, find new opportunities for tree planting in the I-370 right-of-way, and create green open-spaces throughout the planning area.
- Designate forest reserve area along MD 355 on Casey 3.

#### **Testimony**

Testimony supports the Plan's complete treatment of the environment, but points out the best environmental benefit comes from compact development focused on transit. Further concerns were expressed about the effect of development on water quality and paths through wetlands. Property owner of Casey 3 does not support the forest reserve on their property.

### **Water Quality and Stormwater Management**

#### **Staff Recommendations**

- Reforest and protect the Rock Creek stream buffer, and recreate the stream that formerly ran along the west side of the Metro access road.
- Increase landscaping wherever feasible, and encourage low-impact development techniques.
- Ensure that the stormwater management pond continues its environmental function, as it is redesigned as a passive recreation area.

Water quality should not be degraded by redevelopment, which will also offer opportunities for stream restoration.

#### **Testimony**

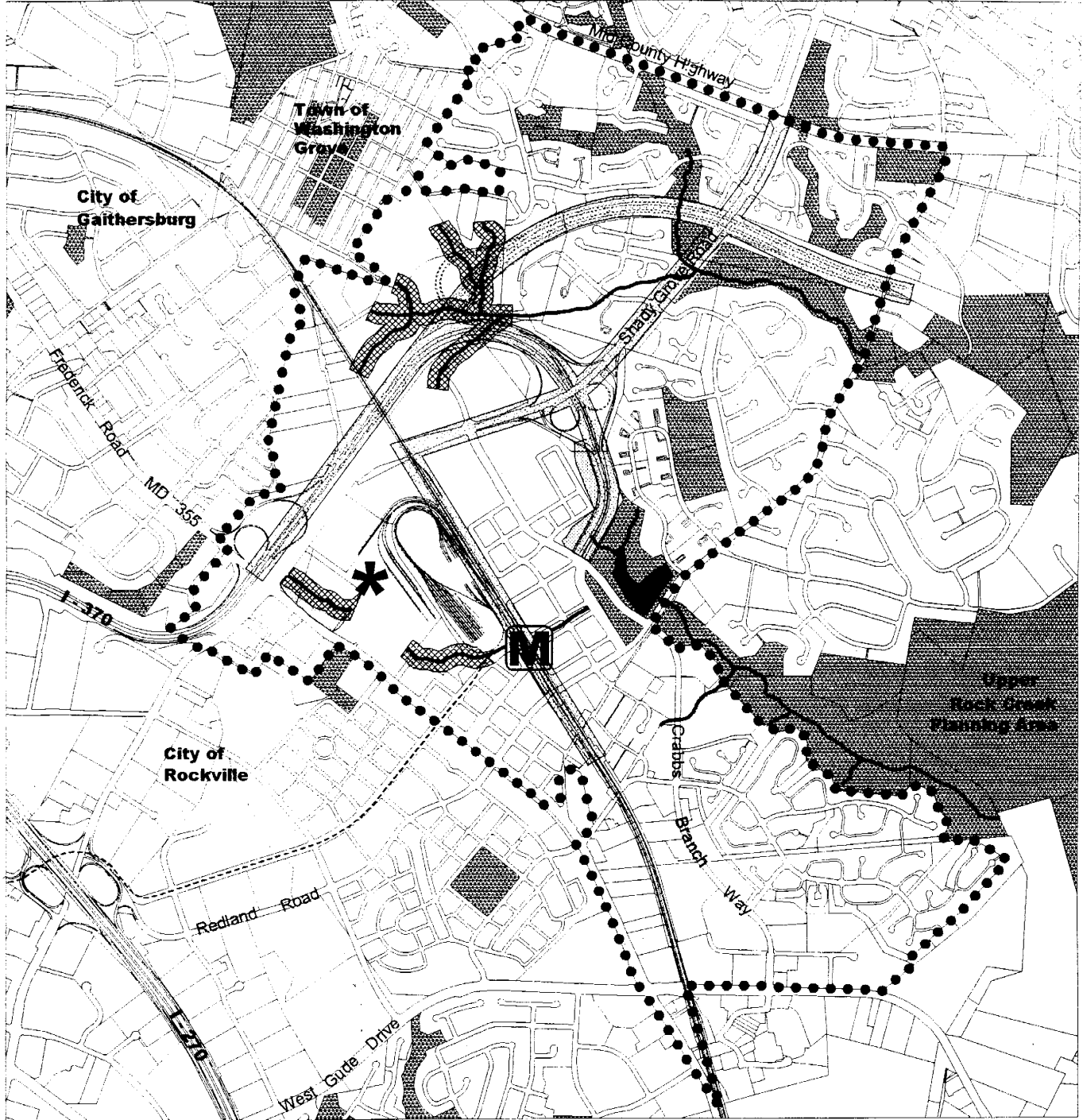
Concerns were expressed about the effect of development on water quality and paths through wetlands.









### **Wetlands**

#### **Staff Recommendations**

- Inventory wetlands locations and quality.
- Use the Environmental Guidelines and landscaping to limit development encroachment and redevelopment impacts.
- Mitigate any unavoidable development impacts.

# Environmental Protection and Restoration Concept



-  Noise Mitigation
  -  Environmental Buffers
  -  Forest Reserve
  -  Streams
  -  Parkland
  -  Odor Control Initiatives
  -  Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary
  -  Corridor Cities Transitway
- Note: Buffers not to scale



### **Testimony**

Concerns were expressed about the effect of development on water quality and paths through wetlands.

### **Noise**

#### **Staff Recommendations**

- Support noise compatible site design, noise barrier walls and berms to mitigate noise.
- Ensure compliance with the County's Noise Control Ordinance.
- Investigate eliminating the CSX train whistle as it passes through the planning area.

Shady Grove experiences significant noise impacts, generated by Shady Grove Road, I-370, rail tracks, and various industrial land uses. These affect the area's quality of life.

### **Testimony**

The community strongly supports noise abatement measures such as barriers along roads and re-routing truck traffic.

### **Air Quality**

#### **Staff Recommendations**

- Design new development to be Metro-accessible and limit new park-and-ride spaces to the existing level.
- Improve pedestrian access and routes throughout the planning area to make walking a viable option.
- Work with the Solid Waste Transfer station to control odors by eliminating or reconfiguring parts of its operations.

The County is not in compliance with federal air quality standards, with pollutants generated by a variety of mobile and non-mobile sources. However, the Plan's recommendation for compact development focused at the Metro station can be a contributor to improving air quality.

### **Testimony**

No testimony was received regarding noise.

### **Analysis**

#### **Environmental Overview**

The green infrastructure in this part of the Rock Creek watershed (Crabbs Branch and Mill Creek tributaries) has been considerably modified by development. This Sector Plan presents an opportunity to accommodate concentrated development that will reduce harmful sprawl elsewhere in the County, while making significant improvements to the existing natural environment in the headwaters of Crabbs Branch and minimizing adverse impacts in Mill Creek.

The Plan area is part of the Upper Rock Creek Watershed that the Planning Board recently dealt with in the Olney and Upper Rock Creek master plans. Protecting and improving the quality and ecological health of headwaters are essential to keeping downstream areas viable. The Upper Rock Creek Watershed in this area is designated as Use IV or Recreational Trout Waters (capable of supporting adult trout for put and take fishing, and to be managed as a special fishery by periodic stocking and seasonal fishing). While streams within the planning area no longer support trout, downstream areas in Rock Creek Park do, which makes it essential that the planning area's water quality be maintained.

There is very little original forest and few wetlands left in the Sector Plan area. The largest remaining areas of contiguous forest and wetlands occur on a small area of private lands just north of I-370. An important wetland area occurs on the Casey 3 property, just north of the Transfer Station.

The Transfer Station, existing industrial uses and the profusion of major roads and planned highways create serious noise and odor conditions. The selection of appropriate uses, their orientations and remediation will be an important part of Plan implementation.

#### **The Future of Shady Grove's Environment**

The area's redevelopment as a residential, mixed-use community offers the opportunity to restore portions of the Crabbs Branch stream system to more natural conditions, complementing the better quality areas downstream. The Plan recommends the establishment of reforestation banks or voluntary reforestation of forest in non-wooded stream valleys on existing vacant properties within the area, to aid in this process. Noise barriers and the careful placement of parking garages and non-residential uses should mitigate the effects of noise and odors.

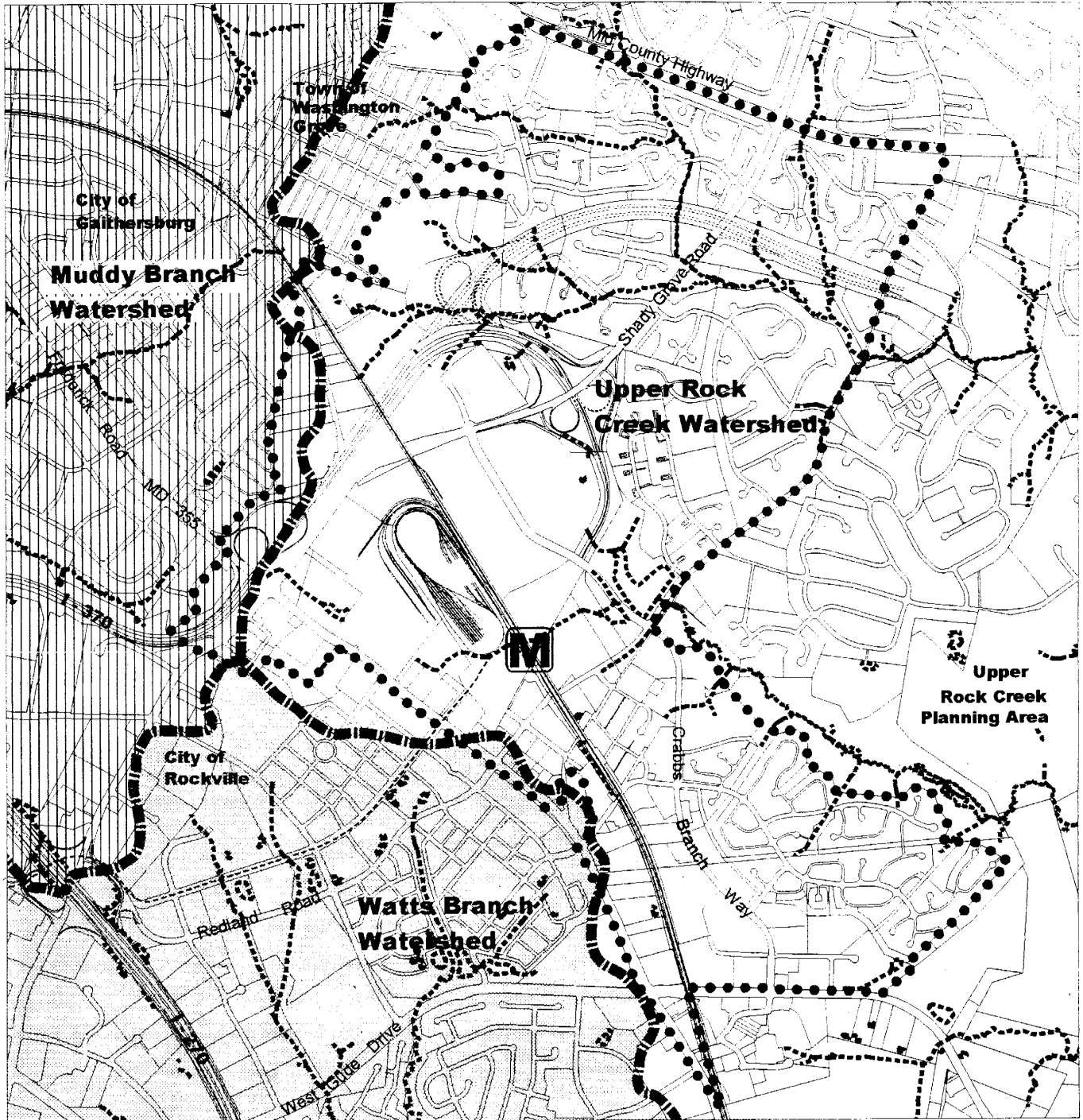
#### **Response to Public Hearing Testimony**







In general, the testimony supported the concentration of uses around the Metro station to reduce sprawl and promote transit, walking and biking as supporting air quality goals. Four issues were raised in the testimony:

- Compact-Mixed Use is the greatest contribution. The Plan cites the benefits of the reduction of sprawl, but the text will be strengthened to emphasize this point.
- Paved Paths should not go through wetlands. The Plan indicates that paved trails should avoid wetlands as much as possible. Occasionally, it is necessary to cross limited wetland areas to make important trail connections. One area of particular concern is the trail connection between the residential areas and Rock Creek Regional Park. One alternate route is suggested via Indianola Avenue, and other alternatives may emerge as part of alignment studies. Text could elaborate on the importance of finding alternative routes.

- Noise Abatement is critical. Washington Grove and residents along Shady Grove Road raised particular concerns about the need for noise abatement. This issue is highlighted in the Plan and specific recommendations are made. One comment was received that the ICC should only be built if noise and environmental degradation is completely mitigated. This project is subject to the National Environmental Policy Act, as well as existing regulations regarding the need for mitigation of specific impacts. This issue is outside the purview of the Sector Plan.
- Stormwater Quality Control is important. The recommendation to use low-impact development techniques, green roofs, parking lot planting, and other techniques to address stormwater quality and quantity was supported. One comment was also received supporting the inclusion of green techniques in the construction of offices and housing. Derwood and the Mill Creek Towne Association urged that environmental issues should not be overlooked with the expectation that the stormwater management system serving the Metro would protect Rock Creek downstream of the ponds. They expressed concern that increased imperviousness in the Metro area could adversely impact headwaters areas where Mill Creek and the Western supply branches merged and could reverse efforts to improve water quality. Staff recommends that text be added to support the need to incorporate green techniques to reduce water quality impacts.
- Forest Reserve is not appropriate for Casey 3. The Master Plan recommends that the property owner use the stream buffer, which will not be available for development in any case, to accept off site reforestation required from other development. Since this represents a potential source of revenue and a long-term aesthetic benefit to the site, staff feels that it should not be a burden to the developer of the property. The expansion of this reforestation area to include the area between Route 355 and the stream buffer would provide an important forest resource in the headwaters of this Use IV stream and form part of the greening of this intensively developed area. While some of the forest planting requirements for the properties being redeveloped may be satisfied by landscaping, there is a critical need for forest in the urbanized areas of the Upper Rock Creek, which could be satisfied in this area of the Casey 3 property that has limited development potential. Staff recommends that the Public Hearing Draft recommendation be retained.

# Watersheds



-  Upper Rock Creek Watershed
-  Muddy Branch Watershed
-  Watts Branch Watershed
-  Watershed Boundaries
-  Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary
-  Streams and Ponds



<b>Shady Grove Sector Plan Environmental Recommendations</b>		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Forest Conservation</b>	Designate forest reserve areas to facilitate off-site reforestation.	Replace forest lost in headwaters and facilitate the satisfaction of off-site forest planting requirements.
	Retain existing tree and forest cover where practicable.	Replace forest lost in headwaters.
	Find new opportunities for tree planting in the I-370 right-of-way.	Replace forest lost in headwaters and provide aesthetic benefits.
	Create green open spaces throughout the planning area.	Supports green infrastructure and enhances the natural environment.
	Integrate forest conservation at earliest stage of development.	This allows for greater assurance that the design will incorporate forest planting.
<b>Water Quality</b>	Reforest and protect the Rock Creek stream buffer, and recreate the stream that formerly ran along the west side of the Metro access road.	Protect existing resources in accordance with the Environmental Guidelines and enhance resources where opportunities exist.
	Increase landscaping wherever feasible, and encourage low-impact development techniques.	
	Ensure that the stormwater management pond continues its environmental function, as it is redesigned as a passive recreation area.	
	Maintain streams, natural surface springs, and seeps in a natural condition so that the existing water quality standards are maintained.	
	Keep stormwater management, sediment and erosion control facilities outside of stream buffers.	
<b>Wetlands</b>	Inventory wetlands locations and quality.	More documentation is needed of existing wetlands and opportunities for enhancement.
	Use the Environmental Guidelines and landscaping to limit development encroachment and re-development impacts.	Wetlands are essential to health of the watershed.
	Mitigate any unavoidable development impacts.	
	Protect wetlands through easements or parkland.	
	Protect areas adjacent to wetlands, avoid paved trails as much as possible.	Some wetland crossings are unavoidable.
	Avoid using wetlands for stormwater management.	Maintaining the existing water balance in a wetland is important
<b>Noise</b>	Support noise compatible site design, noise barrier walls and berms to mitigate noise.	Improving the noise environment is vital to the success of the residential community and mitigation of the increasing traffic noise impacts on existing residents.
	Investigate eliminating the CSX train whistle as it passes through the planning area.	
	Ensure compliance with the County's Noise Control Ordinance.	
<b>Air Quality</b>	Design new development to be Metro-accessible and limit new park-and-ride spaces to the existing level.	The concentration of development at this location should reduce the impact of harmful sprawl elsewhere; alternate modes of transportation should reduce vehicle miles traveled.
	Improve pedestrian access and routes throughout the planning area to make walking a viable option.	
	Work with the Solid Waste Transfer Station to control odors by eliminating or reconfiguring parts of its operations.	Odor control will assure that the Transfer Station can co-exist with the residential and office uses.

# **Shady Grove Sector Plan**

**Worksession #5**

**Area-wide Systems: Transportation, Parks, Schools, Environment**

**Relevant Testimony Summary**



<b>Land Use – Metro Parking</b>	
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	Support the Plan's recommendation to not increase current Metro parking. Reduction of parking may be a good option if alternative investments in housing and travel options generate revenue and ridership. Parking spaces should be managed through market rate pricing to reflect real demand and the location of garages should not interfere with people-oriented uses close to the station.
Jerry Garson, Co- chair, Citizens for Better Potomac Roads	Puzzled by the Plan's recommendations to limit Metro parking spaces while huge demand and potential ridership exists, which could produce significant revenue. The Plan should include statistics on the number of riders using the station and how they get there. Most residents do not want to make mode changes from park and ride to bus to Metro. Plan language should be changed to note that this recommendation is designed to not disturb new residents living near Metro stations.
Harry Sanders, Vice President, Action Committee for Transit	Parking garages are not the best use of the space directly adjacent to the station. In the long run, garages should be relocated and redeveloped for housing. In the short term, consider retail on the first floor.
John Compton, Mayor, Washington Grove	Parking at the Metro station must be limited, while public and private transportation access is dramatically improved.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Association	Group supports the Plan's recommendation for no new parking garages at Metro.
<b>Transportation – General</b>	
Douglas Duncan, County Executive	The Plan should include fuller discussion of the ICC and Midcounty Highway extended. The Plan language should also be flexible about the type of transit service to be provided by the CCT. Concerned that the 35 percent transit mode share is overly ambitious and road analysis implications should be re-examined.
Shelley Winkler	This Plan does not ensure that the traffic will be managed. It only ensures an intolerable level below the even higher level that would be generated by current zoning.
Jan Davis	The Plan should include efforts to reduce business and commuter traffic through streets like Washington Grove Lane.
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	Endorse the creation of a traditional street grid and the public right-of-way shared by cars, transit, bikes, and pedestrians. Efforts should be made to remove pedestrian barriers to transit and other destinations and to create direct bike and pedestrian access to Metro. Support bus lanes and other bus performance enhancers.
Pat Labuda, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	Traffic in this area is congested and has made local roads unsafe for drivers and pedestrians. Residents also need protection from noise and air pollution along Shady Grove, Crabbs Branch, and Redland Road.
James Wasilak, City of Rockville	Concerned about recommendations to create a TMD, limit the parking supply at Metro and the need for additional right-of-way along MD 355 and hope to work with the County to resolve these issues.

Tina Brown, Solutions Not Sprawl	Plan elements essential to reducing traffic are: emphasis on transit service and accessibility, balancing housing and jobs, new biotech jobs, using traffic management techniques, building urban parks and a green buffer.
Pam Lindstrom	Actually provide bike and pedestrian routes as promised, in fact, start them first. Remove barriers to coherent local traffic patterns, Limit parking provided by housing developments, and get serious about traffic demand management.
Boyd & Jo Ann Koffman	Staff has said that 18 percent of King Farm residents use the Metro. If the same percentage of occupants at Metro developments uses transit, 82 percent will be using the area's overburdened roads.
Anne Ambler, Chair, Sierra Club, Montgomery County	Support the Plan's recommendations to implement the CCT as light rail and expand MARC frequency.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	The Plan should address the ICC's impact on local roads.
<b>Transportation – Pedestrian and Bikeway System</b>	
Shelley Winkler	An underpass at Shady Grove Road and Crabbs Branch Way is critical to connect existing neighborhoods to the Metro area. Pedestrian routes and bikeways should allow access to neighborhoods by means other than car.
Elizabeth Klinger, Councilor, Town of Washington Grove	Elements attractive to potential residents and that will help ensure viability include: good access to public transportation, walkable connection, bike paths, and pedestrian-friendly design, minimization of through traffic.
Barbara Raimondo, Dennis Kirschbaum	It is critical that the plan for bike paths remain as the overall plan moves forward. This should include a route from Washington Grove to Metro and to Rock Creek Regional Park, and should include underpasses of major roads.
Sherry Schlenker	Being handicapped, uses a scooter to get around and finds it dangerous in Old Derwood where there are no sidewalks. Sidewalks should be provided.
Pat Labuda, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	Supports the Plan's recommendations for sidewalks and bike trails for better Metro access.
James Wasilak, City of Rockville	Strongly support walkable communities focused on alternative transportation modes and recommends strong language to achieve better at-grade pedestrian crosswalks and signalization of MD 355 to improve pedestrian safety. Also support increased bus serve between King Farm and the Metro station.
Kay Guinane	Pedestrian and bike access to the Metro is badly needed and should become part of the staging plan.
David Hunt	The pedestrian and bike access routes are a good aspect of the Plan, particularly the ability to get to the Metro station safely without a car.
Chip Berman	Do not build a bike path or pedestrian walkway that will allow direct access from the Metro station to our Park Overlook community. Convenience breeds crime.
Carol Duvall	The Plan's proposed bike path through the Park Overlook community does not serve residents of that community should instead be routed to the west, along the stormwater pond and then connect to I-370.

Ann Leonard-Holmburg	Objects to bike path through the Park Overlook community, which may bring a transient presence that might not be in the best interest of our youth. It should be re-routed around the outskirts of the community and still allow options for reaching Needwood Road.
Diana Heller	The proposed bike route and pedestrian paths through the Park Overlook community are not supported by residents and are redundant with routes along Redland Road.
Harry Sanders, Vice President, Action Committee for Transit	Consider sixty-foot rather than seventy-foot street widths, which work better for pedestrians. The 2025 traffic estimates do not warrant additional turn lanes at more intersection near the urban village. Turn lanes hinder pedestrian safety, already an issue in the County.
John Compton, Mayor of Washington Grove	A tunnel beneath Shady Grove at Crabbs Branch is the best option to overcome this 8-lane road as a major barrier to pedestrian and bicycle access. Bikeways and pedestrian friendly walkways to cross the ICC right-of-way, MD 355, and the new Metro access road are also essential.
<b>Transportation – Transportation Management District</b>	
Shelley Winkler	A transportation management district must be in place before any development occurs.
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	Support the plans for a TMD and urge the County to look at further reductions to parking as a key to reducing traffic, increasing housing affordability, and making transit use attractive.
<b>Transportation – Transit</b>	
Harry Sanders, Vice President, Action Committee for Transit	A study of extending rail north of Shady Grove should be undertaken in the short term, not delaying it until the CCT begins operation. The Plan should also support implementation of best design for bus shelters, explore MARC trains stopping at Shady Grove; support a shuttle from the station to area offices.
<b>Transportation – Amity Drive</b>	
Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble	Connecting Amity Drive to Crabbs Branch Way will permit cut-through traffic to the Metro on a residential street, creating a hazardous situation.
David Hunt	Submits a petition of 27 of 30 households in his Derwood neighborhood that protests the proposed connection of Amity Drive to Crabbs Branch Way. The resulting cut-through traffic would decimate the community's quality of life. There are alternatives to a through connection, including connecting only a portion of Oxbridge development to Amity, emergency access only via Amity, placing the school at the end of Amity, allowing bus access but blocking through traffic.
David Stopak	Opposes connecting Amity Drive to Crabbs Branch Way, but if must go forward, it should be downgraded from a primary road, which would still allow it to serve local traffic.
Kay Guinane	Connecting Amity and Shady Grove is a holdover from previous master plans that should be reconsidered. It will be dangerous to direct through traffic onto local streets.
Diana Heller	Rather than connecting Amity Drive to Shady Grove Road, the Plan should recommend connecting Crabbs Branch to Railroad Road for a north-south alternative route between Gude Drive and Gaithersburg.

<b>Transportation – Old Derwood</b>	
Mr. and Mrs. Gabriele Parello	To improve traffic safety in Old Derwood allow left turns from Redland Road onto MD 355, install a traffic light at Yellowstone and Redland, reconfigure the I-370 ramps from Redland to Crabbs Branch, add a traffic circle at Chieftain and Yellowstone and at Derwood Road and Esquire Court. Also, replace steel guardrails with a more pedestrian-friendly stone wall along Crabbs Branch and Redland, and improve streetlighting.
Joe Parello	Old Derwood has been negatively impacted by traffic from the emission station, car dealerships, business condos, and rush-hour cut-throughs. Supports the Plan's recommendations for street and traffic pattern improvements.
<b>Transportation – Redland Road</b>	
Diana Heller	Improve the intersection of MD 355 and Redland Road to include a left turn lane onto MD 355. This location is very congested. The Redland Road exit onto Piccard should be reconstructed to eliminate the "jog." Finally, Redland Road should be reconnected to Shady Grove Road in the King Farm.
Kay Guinane	The Plan should include reference to adding a left turn lane from Redland Road onto MD 355.
James Snee	The Redland Road project should adequately address the aesthetics of the surrounding communities, with environmentally-appropriate retaining walls, undergrounded power lines, and aesthetically pleasing bus shelters.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	Redland Road should remain a two-lane road from Needwood Road to Muncaster Mill Road, and should be designated as an arterial to prevent becoming a "nightmare road" like Shady Grove Road has become. The Plan should also address the noise and air pollution impacts of through traffic transportation projects on the local community.
<b>Transportation – MD 355</b>	
Pat Baptiste, Route 355 Group	Support the creation of an urban boulevard along MD 355. The Plan should call for elimination of the Grosvenor turn-around, give more attention to integrating the CCT with Metro and pedestrian access, eliminate reference to the current AGP review procedures, and should express caution about special exceptions that can affect integrity of community. The Group also has an ongoing concern with increasing traffic along MD 355.
Harry Sanders, Vice President, Action Committee for Transit	In the long run, the best solution for pedestrians crossing MD 355 would be to depress the road, as was discussed at the Shady Grove Charrette.
James Wasilak, City of Rockville	Supports the creation of a boulevard character along MD 355 and suggest that additional streetscape standards be developed to upgrade the corridor.
<b>Transportation – Gude Drive Interchange</b>	
Larry Gordon, representing EDP	Concerned that an interchange with MD 355, particularly depressing MD355 under Gude Drive may impede access/ingress and visibility of their sites.
Diana Heller	There are not enough connections to I-270 from the west and a connection should be made at Gude Drive to improve traffic flow.
Pat Baptiste, Route 355 Group	Supports the Plan's recommendation for a grade-separated interchange at Gude Drive.
<b>Transportation – Shady Grove Road</b>	
Mary Ann Shirven	Traffic safety on Shady Grove Road is compromised because of road design, lack of signs, poor maintenance, and high speeds, and despite repeated calls to public works, nothing has been taken care of. To residents, the problems on Shady Grove Road obvious, significant, and are being ignored by the County.

Boyd & Jo Ann Koffman	Speeding. Lane-merging, and left-turn signals make Shady Grove Road extremely unsafe, particularly at Briardale Road.
Roger Alexander	Institute traffic calming measures along Shady Grove. Recent widening has increased traffic speed and noise and the removal of the turn lane at Briardale has and will continue to cause accidents. Heavy traffic flow and truck traffic exposes pedestrians on the new sidewalks. This Plan should take steps necessary to improve pedestrian access and safety.
Harry Sanders, Vice President, Action Committee for Transit	I-370 should end at Shady Grove Road with at-grade intersections. It should also be extended under the rail lines to provide a continuous bus route and pedestrian access to the Metro.
<b>Transportation – Parking</b>	
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	County should consider “parking streets” or more extensive use of on-street parallel parking as a more flexible parking supply that buffers pedestrians from moving traffic.
Pam Lindstrom	The Plan should pursue apartment buildings with garden courtyards in the middle and parking underneath the buildings.
<b>Public Facilities – Jeremiah Park</b>	
Shelley Winkler	Supports proposed Jeremiah Park and a new library at that location, which needs a recreational and cultural center.
David Stopak	Supports Jeremiah Park and the public open space surrounding the Metro station for this underserved area.
Barbara Raimondo, Dennis Kirschbaum	The Plan should include a library next to the planned Jeremiah Park and an elementary school at another appropriate site that does not interfere with the planned park.
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	The planned library should be integrated with other uses to allow shared parking and residents can walk to it and other destinations.
Douglas Duncan, County Executive	The Plan does not justify the need for this park, and doesn’t take into account the recreation and park facilities in adjacent municipalities. References to this park should be removed from the Plan along with references to an aquatic center and community center. Recommends a local park be part of the Plan.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Association	Supports Jeremiah Park.
Kay Guinane	The Plan should not recommend Jeremiah Park as a back-up elementary school site. The school should be in the community it serves and not deprive the new community of an important park and public facility opportunity.
<b>Public Facilities – Blueberry Hill Park</b>	
David Stopak	This park is the only major recreation area, and must remain as it is.
Chip Berman	Please save Blueberry Hill Park.
John Atchley	Blueberry Hill Park supports home values and quality of life for the community. It is a vital green space that anchors surrounding residential areas.

Boyd & Jo Ann Koffman	Blueberry Hill Park is sacred to Derwood. It should not be up for grabs by MCPS or any other agency of the County.
Richard Hawes, Director, MCPS Dept of Facilities Management	If the current elementary school site on Oxbridge at Casey infeasible, requests that the developer identify another school location on that site. Failing this alternative, MCPS will explore other sites including Blueberry Hill or a site within the redeveloped County Service Park.
<b>Public Facilities – Schools</b>	
John Compton, Mayor, Washington Grove	An elementary school on Casey at Oxbridge serves the existing and new communities, as well as creating an appropriate environment for schoolchildren.
Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble, David Stopak, Jan Davis, Sally Mansfield	An elementary school is the best use of the Oxbridge/Casey site adjacent to the historic meadow.
Richard Hawes, Director, MCPS Dept of Facilities Management	Since M-NCPPC staff has identified stream valley buffers that make the current elementary school site on Oxbridge at Casey infeasible, requests that the developer identify another school location on that site. Failing this alternative, MCPS will explore other sites including Blueberry Hill or a site within the redeveloped County Service Park.
Jim Snee	The Amity Drive school reservation was never formally released and the current Plan provides only one elementary school, making the planning area dependent on surrounding area for school capacity.
Chip Berman	Locate the elementary school in proximity to the community, not at Blueberry Hill Park.
Gary Steele	Urges the Board to find a way to keep the original school site proposed for an undeveloped area near Amity Drive, rather than increased housing development on the Oxbridge site.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance	Support the Amity elementary school site. Plan to double residences must also reserve sufficient space to accommodate students at all levels, especially in an already crowded system.
Kay Guinane	The elementary school proposed on the Casey site is a crucial element of the Plan. This is the most appropriate place for the school: safe and providing local recreation.
<b>Environment – General</b>	
Cheryl Cort, Executive Director, Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities	Commends the Plan's emphasis on creating a rich urban environment with landscaping, street trees, public space, and parks. However, the Plan should recognize that its greatest contribution to the environment is promoting compact, mixed-use development at the Metro station.
Jim Snee	Environmental issues are being overlooked, even though development has the potential to degrade downstream water quality.
Anne Ambler, Chair, Sierra Club, Montgomery County	Supports the Plan's proposal for multiple bikeways, but paved paths must not go through wetlands. Also support conservation easements for wetlands and low-impact and green development techniques.

<b>Environment – Noise</b>	
Heather Hoerle, Shelley Winkler, Christine Dibble, David Stopak, Jan Davis, Sally Mansfield, Barbara Raimondo, Dennis Kirschbaum	Noise abatement measures must be taken to protect Washington Grove from noise generated by I-370 and any industrial uses.
Bob Booher, Chair, Historic Preservation Commission, Town of Washington Grove	The ICC should be built only if it can be assured that the added noise and environmental degradation will be completely mitigated.
Roger Alexander	Urgent need for noise abatement measures along Shady Grove Road. Increasing noise has made it impossible to be outdoors on his property.
Pat Labuda, President, Greater Shady Grove Civic Association	Community is concerned with impacts of noise and supports Plan's recommendations for noise barriers. Must have noise mitigation along Shady Grove Road, to make our homes livable.

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P.O. Box 298  
125 Washington Grove Lane  
Washington Grove, MD 20880-0298  
16 April 2004

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Derek P. Berlage  
Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Dear Mr. Berlage:

We are writing to encourage you to preserve the 13-acre Casey Field as passive open space for everyone's use and to support the MCP Board's past decision to include the Field as Legacy Open Space property. We moved to Washington Grove because of the unique living experience provided here and the open space is an important factor in that experience.

It is critical to protect the historic integrity and setting of Washington Grove in keeping with its historic designation and listing on the National Register of Historic Places so that we, the larger community, and our future generations can continue to enjoy the enhanced quality of life that comes with open natural spaces that are becoming more rare.

The current plan to increase the density of development to 5,500 at Shady Grove will also put an unbearable burden on an already overburdened local road system. The proposed site for active recreation would be located at the extreme edge of this development, further contributing to local traffic congestion. In keeping with the current plan to create a pedestrian-friendly urban environment, it seems more logical to locate such recreational sites at a more central area that is easily accessible to foot traffic.

We do understand the need for growth and compromise, and support the building of an elementary school behind the Field in support of the needs of the Master Plan revision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Satoshi Amagai

  
Jamie Holtzclaw



**Appendix  
School Capacity**

**Existing School Capacity under the FY05-10 CIP**

The Shady Grove planning area is served by three high school clusters: Magruder, Richard Montgomery and Gaithersburg (See High School Cluster Boundaries and Existing and Proposed Schools). The majority of growth proposed around the Metro falls within the Gaithersburg High School Cluster.

The recently approved County Council FY05-10 Capital Improvements Program results in the following school capacity for elementary, middle and high schools within the three clusters:

Projected and Proposed Student Capacity – FY05-10\*  
(number of students)

Cluster	Elementary capacity	Middle school	High school
Magruder	+37	+278	-20
Richard Montgomery	-20	+64	+31
Gaithersburg	+34	+187	+43

\*Source: Enrollment Projections by Montgomery County Schools, October 2002

Estimates indicate that while middle schools have some capacity, both high schools and elementary schools either have no capacity for new students or are close to reaching capacity. Any significant increase in residential units in the planning area will generate demand for more school space.

**Estimated New Student Analysis**

Residential density scenarios were evaluated to understand the student yields for each. The range of densities included a low of 2,700 units in which the Country Service Park is not relocated, to a high of 5,400 units and a relocated the County Service Park to accommodate residential neighborhoods and public facilities. Because student generation is affected not only by the number of dwelling units but the type of unit, the mix of unit types for each scenario changed to reflect urban design analysis and distribution decisions. More high-rise units yield fewer students but less range of unit types.

Analysis shows that all scenarios except for the existing sector plan will require a new elementary school, and contribute to the need for a new middle school and high school, generating some fraction of the total need. Students generated by the build-out of the existing sector plan can be absorbed into existing middle and high schools and with classroom expansions at the elementary schools. The schools required for each scenario follow.

School Demand based upon Alternative's Projected School Population

Alternatives	Elementary	Middle	High School
Public Hearing Draft	1 new school	30% of new school	14% of new school
Worksession #2	1 new school	30% of new school	14% of new school
Town Center #2	1 new school	30% of new school	14% of new school

The alternatives all generate approximately the same number of schools. As the number of units increase with more high-rise units, the students generated at the high school level actually decrease due to the lower number of high school students typically living in apartments. (See Projected School Population Tables for Alternative Development Scenarios)

**Elementary School Site Options**

M-NCPPC and MCPS planners evaluated sites within the planning area for an elementary school, with the understanding that in all scenarios, a new high school will need to be accommodated outside the planning area, probably within the Gaithersburg Vicinity planning area. Feasible sites have been identified but will be formally designated in that plan. All elementary sites in the Shady Grove planning area can accommodate a standard sized elementary school (640 student-sized, 10-12 acres). A large elementary school (750 student-sized), generated by the Town Center Scenario can be accommodated on the Casey at Mill Creek site option, but is somewhat constrained. (see Elementary School Site Options).

The Casey at Mill Creek site offers the best option for locating a 640-student school within the existing community. However, it will require acquisition funding. The other optional sites have problems with access, community opposition, or are compromised by heavy traffic near Metro. The second option, if one needs to be considered, could be the MCPS site within the proposed Jeremiah Park in lieu of the library. The Blueberry Hill option is not recommended due to access concerns and the deficit of recreation parks in the planning area.

**Casey at Mill Creek (Oxbridge development) – 9-acres**

This site is located between two stream valleys and will require adjusting the building program and mitigating environmental impacts. The developer has agreed to provide a reservation for future acquisition by MCPS. Dedication is not possible because development on that site does not generate enough students on its own, and the site is not designated in the 1985 Master Plan. Acquisition cost is a significant factor. The site is adjacent to the existing single-family communities of Mill Creek and the Town of Washington Grove. Access is excellent via Amity Drive and Crabbs Branch Way extended. Some grading encroachment into the stream valley buffers may result but can be offset by increased on-site reforestation.

**Blueberry Hill Park – 10-acres**

This site is the wooded half of the existing local park and is owned by the M-NCPPC. It was set aside in the 1977 Master Plan as a school site. The 1985 Master Plan dropped a number of surplus school sites and recommended that Blueberry Hill should be used solely for recreation. However, the plan did not formally surplus Blueberry Hill as a school site. The community has expressed strong opinions that this site continues as a park, citing a lack of adequate recreation space in their community. There is currently a deficit of recreation facilities within the planning area. Vehicular access to the site is constrained to only one point of access, Redland Road's intersection with Neewood Road. Left turning movements on to Neewood Road will be against the morning am Metro traffic, a heavily congested volume. Loss of pervious area is a concern to environmentalists.

**MCPS Bus Depot at the County Service Park – 10-acres**

In scenarios that relocate the County Service Park, ten acres would be available for an elementary school in the proposed Jeremiah Park neighborhood. In lieu of providing a library, as recommended in the Plan, an elementary school could be provided adjacent to the proposed ten-acre park. Access is excellent via Crabbs Branch Way. Students from the new Metro Neighborhoods could walk to school. However, this is a congested traffic area and safety is a concern. Also, it is preferable to locate a library near Metro rather than an elementary school. It may also be important to use this county land for more housing to ensure that relocation of the County Service Park is adequately funded.

**Casey 6 – 25 acres**

This I-1 site is located just north of I-370, adjacent to the CSX rail line and Robert's Oxygen. A stream valley bisects the site and only the northern portion is viewed as viable for development. Access to the site is excellent via Crabbs Branch Way extended and the proposed connection to Amity Drive. However, the site lies within the industrial area and does not directly abut any residential land. It is isolated from the community it's intended to serve.

**Emory Grove Lane – 11.5 acres**

This surplus school site is located along Midcounty Highway, outside the planning area. Although it is an available site, it is too far away to serve the proposed Metro Neighborhood communities. It should be considered as an available school site for the Gaithersburg Vicinity plan.

**Projected School Population Tables for Alternative Scenarios\***

4/27/04

Public Hearing Draft w/ 4,000units (- 300 Elderly du = 3700 du)

Unit types	% Units	# Units	Elementary	Middle	High School	Total
HR**	31	1160	78	27	20	125
MR	52.5	1942	282	148	120	550
SFA/TH	16	583	146	56	67	269
SFD	.5	15	5	2	2	9
Total	100	3700	511	233	209	953

Worksession #2 w/4636 units (- 300 Elderly du = 4336 du)

Unit types	% Units	# Units	Elementary	Middle	High School	Total
HR**	50	2193	147	50	37	234
MR	35.5	1545	224	117	96	437
SFA/TH	14	583	146	56	67	269
SFD	.5	15	5	2	2	9
Total	100	4336	522	225	202	949

Town Center #2 w/5,400 units (- 300 Elderly du = 5100 du)

Unit types	% Units	# Units	Elementary	Middle	High School	Total
HR**	62	3206	215	74	55	344
MR	25.5	1296	188	98	80	366
SFA/TH	11	583	146	56	67	269
SFD	.5	15	5	2	2	9
Total	100	5100	554	230	204	988

Potential Development w/ 5,795 du (- 300 Elderly du = 5495 du)

Unit Type	% Units	# Units	Elementary	Middle	High	Total
HR	57	3259	219	75	55	349
MF	31	1584	229	120	98	447
SFA/TH	10	567	142	54	65	261
SFD	2	85	28	9	10	47
Total	100	5495	618	258	228	1104

\*Student generation rates are based on countywide standards.

\* HR is defined as 5 stories and higher.

\* 300 Elderly Housing is assumed and not included in school calculations.